V Pal Parisani S. Claudii
Thes April 30
1861.

Meydem Maria

Pardon me not having been able to send a line before, owing to the importance as well as the incessent occupation which now & for some time will demand my utmost skill & activity – I know what an affectionate interest you take in my well being & how anxious you must be that I should really succeed in my very new & important office. – In all points I think I can promise a favorable chance of doing well than I had any reason to expect – For as you know when we last had the happiness to meet our dear Tom & I was uncertain of the future & not only that I had all to learn &

difficult & responsible post; but also that I was expected on entering it to know all about it — Certainly I felt miserably humble & blank then, but now I begin to take heart & have done lucky things which serve to show me that in my fortunate appointment there was a foreknowledge that I would excel — But between ourselves I am glad I did not know all the difficulties of my place at first, but that I have come upon them by degrees — It is quite wonderful how much one can do by degrees & then there is great encouragement & incentive in the power of doing good

This I am writing from my bed for I am laid up with the most severe cold I ever had & I am afraid that in my audience my coughing may

be taken for scoffing & for this there would be plenty of room, except that I am determined not to get in antagonism with the government which would cut me off from half my power—

I have not yet had a moment to have a photograph of my state dress & sword with cocked hat, indeed I dont know myself & still feel uncomfortable in it — when I visited the Secretary of State Cardinal Antonelli I contrived to go in plain black — but you shall have it how fortunate my dear Maria that I did not have to come merely for my painting, for all the fine arts are for the moment at a stand still in this disturbed state of things, & the artists are complaining bitterly of no cousts

At last I am able to snatch a quarter of an hour for my "Keats grave" & it looks something like a picture & I may add to some of the American admirers of Keats

judgment on the most difficult points of law no doubt Mr Gladstone knew well what talents I had, hidden from which I did not know myself & hence my appointment — for I am astonished at the things I do & how they become easy —

I miss the pleasant chit chat on the Sunday that we used to have & the hearty laugh & little bits of seriousness with dear Emma, it's pleasant to me to remember & to cherish the great love between us all including your dear girls, my Emma & Nelly particularly, yet when shall I see you again, !! - It seems I came in a lucky moment to distinguish myself, the time is most marvellous - you'll see my despatches printed, such matter, such wonders & how will it end? I keep a journal of the things coming daily before me for they are historical

My Italian is a great help, the vein of joke, gets me able to speak with facility & joke, gets me thro such ponderous things that sometimes I tremble when 'tis over — Nature in me helps out all the deficiencies of education & I am laborious at a thing & can rely on my efforts — my dear wife & Eleanor are I hope on their way at last, but the many things to settle has detained them — My love to all (now I am quite well but was ill with cold)

Your loving brother Joe